

First Presbyterian Church
West Madison Street at Park Avenue
Baltimore
Baltimore City County
Maryland

HABS No. MD-195

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

HABS
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Location: West Madison Street at Park Avenue, Baltimore,
Baltimore City County, Maryland

Present Owner: The Committee of the First Presbyterian Church,
Madison Street at Park Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland.
Rev. Dr. John H. Gardner, Jr., Pastor.

Present Use: Church

Brief Statement
of Significance: This 1859 church, designed by Nathan G. Starkweather,
is a notable example of the Gothic Revival style
and contains interesting early uses of structural
iron.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: The congregation has been continuous since 1764, and this is their fourth church, but the first on this site. From all accounts the Reverend John C. Backus, pastor of the congregation from 1836 to 1875, was the motivating influence for building a new church and probably had much weight in selecting the architect, site, and design. It was he who had encouraged the founding of "colony" churches, such as the Franklin Street Presbyterian Church (see Historic American Buildings Survey report) where he had taken a major role in selecting the architectural style.
2. Date of erection: Ground was broken in July 1854, and the church was dedicated on October 2, 1859. The principal spire and smaller spires were added in 1873-1874. In 1940 the room at the north end of the church auditorium was converted into the Reid Memorial Chapel.
3. Architect: Nathan G. Starkweather, originally of Philadelphia, and later, Washington, D. C. He supplied the design and drawings, including plans for the main spire at that time, but Edmund G. Lind and William T. Murdoch of Baltimore were associated with him, first as employees, and later in some supervisory capacity. It is probable that they furnished detail drawings, but all drawings were destroyed about 1930 and this cannot be proved. Starkweather was paid \$4,089.02 for services in erecting the main building. Lind and Murdoch were paid \$210 as "architects," and three others were paid as architects: T. Upjohn, Shannon and A. Pohl. (See Supplemental Material under Part I, D of this report.)

On April 20, 1873, Starkweather, now in Washington, contracted to supply plans for building the main spire and turrets for \$500 and to make supervisory visits to the church at \$10 a day when requested. Ltr. contract between N. G. Starkweather and John C. Backus and J. Morison Harris, the Building Committee, dated April 20, 1873, in the church records, which are deposited in the vault of the Mercantile-Safe Deposit Trust Co., Baltimore. There is no statement of account of the cost of erecting the spires similar to that in the Supplemental Material (Part I, D of this report).

4. Construction History: The statement of expenditures on account of building the church (see Supplemental Material, Part I, D of this report) gives a clear picture of the construction of the main building. John Whitelaw, of the firm of Whitelaw & Welsh, was construction superintendent, and specifically concerned with the stone work. The carpenter, David Carson, is a well known local figure who also built speculative housing, such as Waverly Terrace. The large payments for plastering to Dominie & Sloan, S. & A. Bilson and Alexander Hoffman, "modeller," totaling over \$13,000, is a reflection of the ornate interior decoration. It is interesting to note that gas light was installed originally and central heating. Robert O. Renwick supplied the pulpit furniture for \$479.87 which is still in use.

A principal feature of the construction was the provision of special stone piers for the tower, and the placement of vertical iron columns for its support. It is clear that the tower was planned carefully from the beginning by Starkweather. While no supplier for the iron is listed, on page 3 of the statement of expenditures (see Supplemental Material, Part I, D of this report) (Wendell) Bollman is paid for placing iron ties in the roof. His firm, The Patapsco Bridge and Iron Company, furnished the iron for the spire in 1873, and may have supplied the iron columns as well.

On page 3 of the statement of expenditures (see Supplemental Material, Part I, D of this report) is an item for "Cleaning Monuments," and on page 4 expenses for "taking down, repairing and resetting organ." The monuments referred to at least included two marble plaques and a marble urn which had been in the previous church, and were moved into this one. It appears that the organ was also moved from the old church and rebuilt by "Erben." This is presumably Henry Erben, an organ manufacturer who was resident at 7 South Eutaw Street, Baltimore, by 1853 or earlier. He may have been the same "Erben of New York" who installed the organ of the Franklin Street Presbyterian Church in 1846. The case for the rebuilt organ was built by Renwick. (The present large organ was made by Ernest M. Skinner for the San Diego World's Fair of 1915. It was later placed in the Grove Park Inn, Asheville, N. C., and purchased by

the church in 1929. A new Austin organ is to replace this instrument in 1961).

On December 9, 1872, the minutes of the Committee of the Church (the term used for the trustees) contain a resolution that the towers be completed when sufficient subscriptions are obtained, and direct Dr. John C. Backus to proceed in that direction. On January 8, 1873, he announced that they had pledges of \$33,000, and the Committee authorized the Building Committee to make contracts. Minutes of the Committee ..., bound mss. volumes in the church records on deposit in the vaults of the Mercantile-Safe Deposit and Trust Co.]

On March 4, 1873, a contract was made with John Whitelaw to superintend the construction for \$3,000 a year, and on April 20 the contract was made with Starkweather as architect. However, for some unknown reason another contract was made on May 15 with Peter Hamilton to act as superintendent at \$175 a month - perhaps Whitelaw had died. Hamilton served as superintendent until October 1874, when the work was apparently completed. The Building Committee was composed of Dr. Backus, Hamilton Easter and J. Morison Harris, and the last seems to have been the most active member. Loose papers, mss. in the church records on deposit in the vaults of the Mercantile-Safe Deposit and Trust Co.]

Peter Hamilton went to Boston in May and June to negotiate for building stone, and there are a number of letters concerning comparative prices. He settled on the Bay View Quarry Company of Boston to supply New Brunswick freestone, but cautioned the Committee that the head of the company, W. J. Roberts, was the "smartest of the Boston smart men," and would have to be watched. Loose papers, mss. in the church records on deposit in the vaults of the Mercantile-Safe Deposit and Trust Co.]

Meanwhile Starkweather wrote from Washington to the Committee about the size and weight of the iron. The "cast iron beam" he recommended would carry 69,000 lbs. and the "main center rod" would carry 71,000 lbs., which was ample strength for the purpose. Loose papers, mss. in the church records on deposit in the vaults of the Mercantile-Safe Deposit and Trust Co.]

On June 10, 1873, the Patapsco Bridge and Iron Works of Baltimore agreed to "furnish the cast and wrought iron" for the spire "as per drawings presented," as follows:

- 1 Main Cast Iron Beam
- 6 Small " " "
- 8 3/4" Suspension Rods
- 1 1-1/2" " "
- 7 Swivels

The cost was to be \$594.00, but they would reduce this price by \$60 if permitted to make certain unspecified

alterations. The letter was signed by Wendell Bollman and J. E. O. Miller. Bollman was the inventor of the famous bridge truss known by his name. Loose papers, mss. in the church records on deposit in the vaults of the Mercantile-Safe Deposit and Trust Co.

5. Original Plans: The drawings and plans were destroyed about 1930. Plans for the Reid Memorial Chapel (1940) are in the possession of the church.
 6. Alterations and Additions: In 1939-40 the rooms on the first floor north of the church auditorium were converted into the Reid Memorial Chapel. The architects were Cram and Goodhue, and the style is Tudor Gothic, with very good carved wood decoration. In 1958-59 the spire was stabilized and repaired by the Consolidated Engineering Company of Baltimore at great cost. The stone sheathing of the upper 25 feet of the spire was fastened with phosphor bronze dowels and cables, and the stone repointed. Pinnacles and stone decorations were similarly strengthened and repaired. Extensive repairs were made to the slate roof of the church also. There are plans to remove the present organ and replace it in 1961.
 7. Important Old Views: About 1859 Edmund George Lind, then an employee of Starkweather, made small water color paintings of the interior and exterior of the old First Presbyterian Church (1795). The Peale Museum and the church both have sets of these. The Museum also has a photograph of the exterior, and the church has one of the interior. There is an oil painting of the exterior at the Museum, too. The church has copies of two large lithographs of 1860 of the proposed new church, and there is a good copy at the Maryland Historical Society of one of them. Smaller lithographs and engravings exist in profusion. The Peale Museum has a set of 14 photographs made from the top of the spire of the church in 1874, which give a remarkable panorama of the city. Another photograph of the same date shows the tower from the ground with its building scaffolding in place. In 1959, when scaffolding for the repair work was in place, a photographer from the Baltimore Sun made another series of 14 views from the top of the spire.
- B. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated: The church records cited are all kept in a vault at the Mercantile-Safe Deposit & Trust Company, Baltimore. It was not feasible to study them at great length under these conditions, and a great deal more detail could be gotten from them. Dr. Gardner is at present writing a history of the congregation.

C. Supplemental Material: The following is quoted from the Records of the First Presbyterian Church, dated November 19, 1862:

Statement of Expenditures on account new Building 1st Presbyterian Church and of moneys received therefore by A. Archibald Stirling, Treasurer, Building Committee

Paid	Whitelaw & Welsh	Stone builders		\$32,033.98
	Jno. Whitelaw	Stone work done under his superintendence		
		The stone purchased by Committee \$ 381.83		
		Work amounting to 4,683.97		
			5,065.80	
	ditto	Contract for work on Main Tower		3,491.94
	ditto	do. for completing tower		856.94
	ditto	Sundry jobs amounting to		251.06
	ditto	Contracts for pinnacles		2,620.00
	N.G. Starkweather	Architect		4,089.02
	Hugh Brady	Digging cellar & other labor		1,877.07
	Oliver & Flemming	Stone masons foundation	4,445.70	
	ditto	other work	774.35	
	ditto	"	95.46	
	ditto	"	209.73	5,525.24
	David Carson	Carpenter	13,422.39	
			4,861.07	
				18,283.46
	John L. Reese	Bricks & bricklaying		11,000.07
	George A. Foose	bricklayer		480.36
	Jas. A. McComas	ditto		407.22
	Dieter Bargar	ditto (bricklayer)		390.97
	John Whitelaw	Repairs of stone work		33.18
	ditto	for cleaning down walls		200.00
	ditto	Services as superintendant		300.00

Sundry persons	for stone piers, and foundations for Iron Columns, Iron Girders in Main Tower	6,679.96
Sundry iron work		1,147.72
Wm. Bayley	Slater	1,621.34
Copper & tin Gutters & Spouting		449.80
Tinning on roof		20.88
Tin roof of Main Tower		140.39
Tin work		6.81
		<u>617.88</u>
	Carried forward	96,973.21

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Amount carried forward		96,973.21
R. W. Wilson	Painter	1,401.57
Gibson & Co.	for Glass	1,076.75
Lightning rods & repairing		177.00
Sundries for cement & lime		2,668.96
Cost of parapet wall on Park Avenue		200.00
Laths, nails & yarn		259.63
Cost of inside roof of tower		27.82
Gas fitting	West & Ivens 884.54 Rogers & Sons 45.48	930.02
Sunwalt & Green	For Stone coping & spent Stones [?]	101.81
Stanley & Co.	For tin tubing	102.45
Kestenbach [?]	For furnace under Lecture Room	250.00
Collins, Heath & Hutchinson	for Furnace	784.02
Hire of stoves for plastering in Winter		10.00
Insurance		1,722.50
Interest & Discounts		1,850.07
T. Upjohn	Sundries as architect	125.00
Shannon	Architect	50.00

A. Pohl	do.		293.00
Dominie & Sloan	Plasterers		1,018.93
S. & A. Bilson	do.	5,398.58	
		1,235.00	
		2,075.75	
		925.00	9,634.33
Cost of enclosure at different times, doors and windows			
in winter when plastering			148.99
Watching building			1,683.25
John Stewart	Rent of lot Park street	348	
	less paid by Whitelaw	209.50	138.50
Alexr. Hoffman	Modeller		2,620.12
Labor connected with Alexr. Hoffman's work			61.25
Cost of arbitration Suit of Hoffman vs. Committee			325.00
Coal for heating Audience room			<u>15.75</u>
Carried forward			124,649.93

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Amount brought forward			124,649.93
Bollman for placing ties in Roof			658.25
Expenses of a Committee in Philada. about Iron Railing			24.00
Cost of tiling vestibule			300.00
"	Cleaning Monuments		15.00
[cost of] taking down, repairing, & resetting organ			
	Paid Erben	395.75	
	Renwick (for case &c.)	800.00	
	for gilding	10.00	
	foreman of Erben	20.00	
			1,225.75
R. Renwick for furniture			479.87
Jno. Turnbull for carpeting			1,085.85
Miscellaneous			1,713.58
Cotten	[?] & Co.	for Brackets	172.75

Jenkins	for Upholstery	509.12
Lind & Murdock	Architects	210.00
Baker & Bros.	Paints &c.	301.99
Thomas & Sons	Turners, for Pew Ends	327.86
Hayward & Bartlett	for Iron Railings	1,081.00
Portland [?]	For sodding lot	270.60
Ground rent paid George Brown due Jany. 1858		357.65
do.	paid H. McElderry & wife	434.95
Principal of ground rent of \$91 per annum bought out from Mrs. Margaret McElderry		<u>3,033.33</u>
	Total expenditure	\$136,850.98

[The remainder of page 3 and page 4 is money received by Treasurer. This includes six loans; donations of \$7,385; sale of old church property \$23,127; ground rent created on church property for \$25,000 to George Brown, rent \$1,500 annually; and miscellany.]

Compiled by Wilbur H. Hunter, Jr.
Director, The Peale Museum

Assisted by F. Garner Ranney
Archivist, The Peale Museum

April 1960

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This church has the finest Gothic Revival tower in Baltimore and is a notable example of the flamboyant Gothic Revival style in nineteenth century architecture. The building is particularly interesting because of the early use of structural iron.
2. Condition of fabric: Good. The tower stone work was completely repaired and stabilized in 1958-59.

- ### B. Technical Description of Exterior:
- The church proper is rectangular. At the south front the base of the central tower protrudes from the wall and is flanked with protruding octagonal turrets at each corner of the building. The spire is said to be 268 feet high. The Monumental City, by George W. Howard, Baltimore, 1873. The turrets are asymmetrical:

that on the southwest is divided into three stories, topped by an ogee roof with pinnacles, and is 78 feet high. [The Monumental City, by George W. Howard, Baltimore, 1873.] The southeast turret is decorated with crocketed pediments with pinnacles and tapers in a spire 128 feet high. [The Monumental City, by George W. Howard, Baltimore, 1873.]

At the north end of the edifice, beyond the church auditorium, is added a two-story building which appears from the outside to be a "transept," sharing a common roof with the church proper, but it is separated from the auditorium by a bearing wall. This now contains a chapel and upstairs office rooms. The end of this "transept" projects slightly beyond the east wall.

1. Foundations: A full basement lies under the church and chapel, with about eight feet head room. The floor is dirt and very uneven. The outer foundation walls are rough stone set in lime mortar. Under the main tower are two very large piers of rough stone. The two corner turrets rest on circular stone wells. Supporting the church floor are four longitudinal arcades composed of stone pillars which are connected by brick semi-circular arches and brick spandrels on which the floor joists sit. The interior wall at the back of the church rests on two similar arcades which are about four feet apart. (A more detailed description of the basement will be found at the end of the section dealing with the interior of the building.)

2. Wall construction: The walls are of brick throughout. The interior wall, at the end of the church auditorium, is plastered on both sides. The exterior walls on Madison Street and Park Avenue are faced with brown New Brunswick freestone and elaborately decorated. Five buttresses are on each side of the church proper and rise above the roofline. In addition there are larger buttresses at the corners of the "transept" on Park Avenue. All these are terminated by delicately elongated pinnacles with crockets and other decoration. The freestone of these sides is richly carved in window tracery, hood molds, window sills, entrance arches, cornices and pinnacles.

By contrast, the north, or rear, wall is plain brick. The hood molds are plain cement. Probably this wall was originally stuccoed, as is the present west wall. Here the drip molds are also very plain and other decoration is of the simplest. The stuccoed buttresses of the west wall have flat recessed panels and are terminated shortly above the cornice by pyramidal lead caps. The top of this wall has a lead trim and the cornice shows only a simple motif, consisting of arched panels with a ledge and dentils below.

3. Roof: The construction of the roof is complicated and unusual. The ornamental church ceiling (see description of interior) is wholly suspended from the roof, which is at least thirty feet higher than the ceiling. Seven scissors trusses of 6" by 12" timbers are spaced evenly along the roof. Counting from the south, the first five match up with the exterior buttresses, the sixth thrusts against the corner buttress of the "transept," and the seventh thrusts against

the middle of the chapel area wall. The trusses have horizontal iron tie rods, and there are heavy iron straps at the joints. The girders are mortised and tenoned into each other. Between the trusses are 3" by 6" rafters, with longitudinal roof boards.

The ceiling below is plastered on complex wooden forms. According to Colonel Edward S. Hopkins, chairman of the church building committee, a consulting engineer, the plaster ceiling is very thin and it was not even thought advisable to lay insulation blankets on it. The wood framing is quite strong, however. Numerous timbers of about 2" by 4" drop down from the truss girders and are nailed into the forms. A number of iron tie rods also connect the trusses and ceiling. The second, third, and fourth trusses have 1" by 2" iron ties running from the peak down vertically into the ceiling.

It is estimated that the peak of the roof is about 75 feet above the ground. The north exterior wall supports the roof tree. The interior wall, at the end of the auditorium, rises above the ceiling only part way to the roof and does not appear to support it.

4. Main tower and spire: The principal feature of the construction is the main tower and spire. It rests on special stone piers which are connected with, but apparently independent of, the rest of the foundations. The part of the tower which projects from the front of the church is apparently constructed of load bearing brick walls without metal. However, the half of the tower which rises out of the roof is supported from the foundations on four heavy iron columns which rise at the rear of the church auditorium and have the appearance of plastered Gothic columns supporting the ceiling. The tops of these iron piers come through the ceiling and can be plainly seen from the loft. They have an X section, but are in one piece, as near as the writer can make out. Across the piers is a transverse "I" beam of riveted plates from wall to wall. Resting on this are the ends of two longitudinal fabricated box girders. They support the side walls of the tower above this point, are anchored in the front masonry, and cantilever about two feet into the loft area. A brick arch rests on the cantilevered portion of the box girders and supports the inboard, or north, wall of the tower above. The roof tree is supported by this tower wall.

The square tower, strengthened by buttresses at each corner, rises above the roof line. There each face is terminated by a high crocketed pediment with finial, each pediment decorated with a large carved stone lozenge enclosing a tracery rosette. The cornices of these pediments, like the other exterior cornices, have a pattern of long tongue-shaped dentils.

The corner buttresses of the tower rise beyond the spring of the pediments, independent of the main structure, and are terminated by high and slender pinnacles. Between them soars the octagonal spire, decorated with four long and narrow louvred openings above the four pediments of the tower, each opening surmounted by a pinnacle, and the spire is further decorated with lozenge-shaped openings, vertical ribs, and a very large and deeply-incised finial. The tapering lines of the spire are bent very slightly inward, instead of being quite straight, and this refinement no doubt contributes to the grace of the over-all design.

At several levels inside the upper tower there are iron corner braces of "I" beams. An iron suspension rod drops from some point high in the spire down to about the loft level. At several levels in the spire there are cross braces from the suspension rod which act as tie rods between opposite faces of the spire walls. The tower and spire walls are load bearing, brick with freestone facing.

C. Technical Description of Interiore:

1. General Plan: Although the roof of the church is cruciform, conveying an impression of shallow transepts within, these "transepts," as has been stated, bear no relation to the plan of the rooms below. The general plan of the interior is rectangular, divided transversely into the narthex across the south end; the main auditorium; two ambulatory corridors on either side of the pulpit recess; and then a modern chapel with choir rooms and the pastor's office above.

2. Entrances: The three main entrances are along the south wall, facing Madison Street, and another is situated at the end of the east "transept" on Park Avenue. This last leads into a vestibule of its own, giving access to the modern chapel, an ambulatory, the cellar stairs, and a staircase leading to the floor above the chapel. There is also a small side door in the west wall, at the end of the other ambulatory passage, which is severely plain.

3. Doors: Apart from the west door, all the doors are highly decorated and richly carved with panels and Gothic tracery. On Madison Street the massive double doors have quatrefoils at the bottom of each leaf, surmounted by panels and culminating tracery. As seen from the outside, they appear to rise to the apex of each arch, but actually they are cut at a height of about eight feet from the sill and the upper area is stationary. Later, outer storm doors have been added to the side entrances on Madison Street, but a partition inside the main entrance makes similar provision there unnecessary.

The inner doors, leading from the vestibules into the auditorium, are of pine and likewise decorated in heavy Gothic paneling on both sides. All take the form of a shallow Tudor arch.

4. The Narthex: The narthex runs the width of the church. It is roughly yoke-shaped: The hump of the yoke being represented by the enclosed central area beneath the tower, and the curving ends corresponding to the outward turn of the side corridors, which lead directly into narrow spiral staircases in the corner turrets.

The central and widest part of the narthex, at the base of the tower, is 17 feet deep by 18-1/2 feet wide. About seven feet from the front door is a partition of wood and glass, with glass-paned doors, to keep out the weather. This is apparently of a later date.

The narrower, corridor-like areas of the vestibule, on either side of the tower area, are seven feet deep. Each has its own double door from Madison Street.

The ceiling over the whole narthex is low, so low that the arches of the inner doors are run somewhat awkwardly into the cornices, and this crypt-like design was doubtless intended to impart an air of Gothic mystery to the approaches. It certainly greatly

enhances, by contrast, the dramatic impression of height and space received upon passing into the auditorium.

The narthex ceiling is coffered plaster, almost flat, and reminiscent of Tudor Gothic. In the center, plaster moldings radiate from a square filled with trefoils, and in the side corridors are a succession of coffers containing moldings arranged in a "union jack" design.

The tile floor is laid in a checkerboard pattern of black, red and white blocks. Outside door sills are stone; those of the inner doors are wood.

The narthex walls are plastered, ruled to simulate stone blocks, and painted a pinkish-tan. The angles of these walls are deeply rounded off, creating a sense of flowing movement.

The narrow spiral stairs in the turrets at each end mount to the gallery of the church proper. These wooden stairs are built around an octagonal post. Each turret has five high narrow windows--two lancet and three squared at the top. (The lower turret at the southwest corner appears to have more windows, but only five open into the stair well.) The ceiling of each turret is a shallow plaster dome, decorated with plaster ribs that rise from simple corbels to a central medallion.

5. The Auditorium, or Church Proper: The church auditorium is impressively proportioned--high and spacious. The plan is rectangular, about 70 feet long by 62 feet wide. Three doors lead into it from the narthex, the center being double and the side doors single. The northern wall has a single door on either side of the pulpit recess, as well as two narrow doors into the pulpit recess from the east and west ambulatories. These will be described later.

A gallery occupies part of the area over the narthex and runs along the east and west walls, being carried straight across the long stained glass windows. The construction of these side galleries is somewhat obscure; they seem to hang from the walls without other support than a row of concave brackets which appear inadequate. These brackets, presumably of iron, are covered with plaster and have rich plaster corbels. The terminal corners of the gallery at the north wall are deeply rounded off. The soffit, or under side, of the gallery is covered with plaster divided into square panels, each panel containing plaster ribs in a St. Andrew's cross design.

The gallery railing is solid wood, the outside decorated with trefoils interspersed with buttress-type braces. This railing curves behind the four columns which rise at the back of the church, instead of running into them.

Over the central southern door the gallery is carried further forward, to provide additional space for the choir and organ console. The choir balcony is furnished with a higher open-work railing, superimposed upon the solid railing, and its posts are decorated with finials and crockets. The floor of the choir balcony is graduated in three steps. Part of the area at the back is occupied by the present organ, which will shortly be removed and the full width of the gallery restored. On the east and west sides of the church the gallery is wide enough to accommodate two banks of pews.

6. The Church Ceiling: The soaring and complicated ceiling is the chief decorative and conceptual element of the whole interior design, and is what most immediately impresses the visitor by its height, intricacy and appearance of great weight.

The double rise of this plaster ceiling suggests a roof of pronounced hammer-beam construction supported by elaborate fan-vaulting. Or to put it another way, the rise of the ceiling corresponds to the roof of a cathedral nave with side aisles, only in this case no columns exist to set off the side aisles--there being nothing below the massive pendants which correspond to columnar capitals.

Springing from the walls and these airy pendants, the side vaulting takes the form of a series of rampant arches, bending inward to increase the sense of thrust and movement toward the apex of the church. The higher central arch, over the main body of the auditorium, appears to be an equilateral one.

This use of fan-vaulting with heavy pendants seems reminiscent of the Henry VII Chapel in Westminster Abbey and may have been remotely inspired by some such example. The plaster ribbing is rich and pronounced and decorated with highly elaborate bosses at the intersections.

The luxuriant plaster foliage found on these bosses, pendants and corbels, and in many other places throughout the auditorium, is a distinctive feature of the style and owes a good deal to Decorated Gothic, being similar to some foliate carvings in Winchester Cathedral. It amounts, however, to a kind of Victorian rococo in its flamboyance and exaggeration of forms. The writhing, intricate, and deeply incised and pierced convolutions of stylized leaves and floral shapes, such as oak leaves and acorns, used throughout the scheme, give to the whole interior an almost restless sense of movement, rhythm, and vitality. This exuberance might be considered a decadence of the Gothic style, but its richness is consistent with the general decorative concept and is counterbalanced to some extent by the massiveness and solidity of the over-all design.

Along the apex of the ceiling are five circular openings, each of which contains a ring of nine smaller openings for electric lights. This circular motif is reiterated in five medallions above the five windows on the east and west walls. Each medallion contains a quatrefoil enclosing a rosette.

Between the windows, the converging ribs of the side vaulting appear to carry the weight of the ceiling down to heavily foliated plaster capitals atop short cluster-columns which rest in turn on massive foliated corbels above the gallery. Near the doorways to the turret stairs both the east and west walls are decorated with a tall and narrow niche with a projecting hood of plaster tracery.

The south wall has a deep central bay behind the choir balcony. This bay occupies the area of the tower and is closed by a vaulted arch.

7. Columns: At the edge of the rear gallery, against the inner wall of the narthex, rise four columns, two set close together on either side of the projecting choir balcony and the central entrance below it. The inner two correspond with the tower corners at these points and all four help to bear the burden of the tower and spire

above. (See introductory discussion of the tower construction.)

These columns begin with high square plaster bases projecting from the inner wall and becoming semi-octagonal above the wainscoting. They then continue as plaster-covered shafts, deeply paneled and otherwise decorated, culminating in prominent "capitals" in line with the gallery. From these "capitals" rise the columns proper, each a quatrefoil cluster of piers. The final capitals are particularly elongated and flamboyant.

8. The Chancel, or Pulpit Recess: At the opposite, northern end of the church is the focal point of worship: the pulpit recess. This is a high and shallow alcove, framed in an opening which rises to three lancet arches, set off from one another by two deeply plunging pendants. The apex of the molding round each arch is crowned with an elaborate plaster finial, roughly in the form of a fleur-de-lis.

The wall of the recess is covered with rich plaster tracery in the Decorated Gothic style and is given a sense of upward movement by the narrowness and height of its foliated panels and niches. It is painted in two shades of beige to accentuate the patterns of the tracery.

On each side four steps, rounded at the corners, lead up to the first level of the platform in this recess, and three more lead up to the platform fronted by the central pulpit. At the ends of the platform are narrow doors, set in lancet arches, which lead to the east and west ambulatories.

The pulpit is oak, three-sided on the face towards the congregation. It projects from a massive pedestal and is richly carved with Gothic pediments and cusped designs, with buttresses and heavy pendants at the corners. Behind it is a wide Gothic sofa, the carved open-work back in the form of three crocketed pediments with finials and side pinnacles. A similar motif is repeated on the two chairs which flank the pulpit on the lower platform, each chair having a single pediment. All this furniture was made by Robert O. Renwick, about 1860.

The north wall on either side of the pulpit recess is richly decorated with plaster moldings in the form of three high lancet arches with floral finials and interior tracery. The middle arch in each case is wider and higher than the others and encloses at its base a doorway, set in a low ogee arch crowned by a fleur-de-lis finial. These single doors are similar to the others, with two Gothic panels on each side and square panels below.

9. The Wainscoting and Walls: The wainscoting around the church proper is plain plank paneling below, surmounted by paneling in a series of Gothic arches. The plastered walls are painted a fairly dark beige up to the cornice, above which both walls and ceiling are a lighter shade. The cornices inside resemble those on the outside of the building in some respects and have the same long tongue-shaped dentils.

10. Windows: There are five stained glass windows along both the east and west walls of the auditorium. They rise from the top of the wainscoting to above the gallery which is thrown across them. Almost all are double-hung sash windows with brass locks, but two have had small tilting sections installed at the gallery level at the southwest

corner. Each window is divided into two foliated lancets, with a small light between the apex of each lancet. Frame moldings are partly wood and partly plaster. Over the arch of each window is a plaster hood mold rising from foliated corbels set well below the spring of the arch.

Beginning at the northeast corner and running in sequence round the church, the east and west windows may be roughly dated by the years in which the persons died whom they memorialize:

- a. Subject died 1871 (but the style of the design, painted on glass in geometrical patterns seems somewhat earlier).
- b. No date, but also an early design.
- c. Subject died in 1859.
- d. Subject died in 1856.
- e. Subject died in 1885.
- f. Subject died in 1897 (early Tiffany type).
- g. Subject died in 1915 (later Tiffany type).
- h. Subject died in 1893 (similar to f. above).
- i. No date. Style similar to e. above. There is a portrait of a young girl, almost a photographic likeness, in the light between the lancets.
- j. Subject died in 1875.

In addition, there are windows in the high bay behind the choir balcony. These tower windows are largely obscured by the present organ, but a little early painted glass is visible in their narrow foliated lancets. On either side of this bay, in the south wall, is a group of three lancets, the middle one being larger and higher than the others, all within three lancet arches. These windows are by Connick and executed in rich blues, purples and reds.

Various memorial plaques are placed around the church and in the vestibule. The most prominent memorials are those which flank the pulpit recess; both are in the form of a marble pedestal surmounted by a shaft and urn. That to the west is a memorial to the Reverend Patrick Allison, died 1802; the eastern one commemorates the Reverend John Chester Backus, died 1884. The earlier monument is believed to have stood in the previous building occupied by the church.

11. Floor: The floor of the church is covered with a wall-to-wall red carpet.

12. Pews: The pews are of dark wood, with pine backs, walnut edging and carved walnut ends. The seats are covered with red padding. There are two small box-like pews in the northeast and northwest corners, at right angles to the body of the church.

13. Font: A white marble octagonal font on a thin octagonal pedestal is situated near the west door of the north wall and is of more recent date.

14. Rear Vestibule: The entrance from Park Avenue opens onto a vestibule behind the church proper. This vestibule was redecorated in accordance with designs by Cram and Goodhue in 1940. It has a red tile floor; the walls are paneled in a light wood; the

barrel-vaulted ceiling is of the same wood and has a central longitudinal beam crossed by nine plain transversal ribs. Illumination is provided by a lancet window on each side of the street door and a hanging lantern for electric light.

On entering from the street one finds a new staircase (replacing an older one) in the corner on the left. Part way up this staircase a narrow door opens into the end of the east gallery. The stairs continue past this to the floor above.

Under the staircase is a door leading to the basement. A few feet further on is one of the doors to the church auditorium, with a passage beside it (the "east ambulatory" referred to above) which ends in a narrow door opening into the side wall of the pulpit recess.

The north wall of the vestibule has an ornamental door to a closet.

15. Reid Memorial Chapel: Directly opposite the Park Avenue entrance is the door to the Reid Memorial Chapel, installed by Cram and Goodhue in 1940 in place of an earlier meeting hall.

The axis of this chapel is east and west. The Tudor Gothic style is restrained and is modified by certain "modern" elements. The ceiling is flat plaster with exposed transversal beams and two larger beams which are supported by angel corbels. The wainscoting is paneled in a simplified linen-fold design. The east end has a shallow chancel, between rectangular organ screens elegantly carved and pierced with tracery. Originally two double-arched windows opened into this western end of the room, but these have been closed up although they are still observable from the outside.

In addition to the east entrance, the chapel is furnished with two doorways in the south wall. All these entrances are set in wide frames of carved wood.

There are three stained-glass windows in the north wall, of two lancets each, and all are by Connick and of similar and complementary design. Their dates are 1948, 1951, and 1959 respectively, the earliest being at the altar end.

Electric light is provided by two rows of lamps hanging from the ceiling, furnished with long tubular coverings of tinted glass which are severely plain. There is also indirect lighting in the small chancel.

Architects' plans for the chapel and its vestibule are in the possession of the church.

16. Rooms above the Chapel: The modern staircase from the chapel vestibule leads to a wide landing hall, still bordered by the original Victorian rail of heavy turned balusters. To the right two small doors lead into toilets recently partitioned off from this landing. To the left a larger door opens into a passage about six feet wide which leads to the Pastor's office. Opposite the head of the stairs is a third doorway, opening into two large rooms, similar to a double parlor.

The original doors on this floor are all in the form of a shallow Tudor arch and have two lancet panels on each side with a projecting band and square panels below. Those opening off the landing

hall are entirely of wood, but those from the adjoining passage have glass panels in the upper part.

The wainscoting is of the same design throughout: Vertical planks above the molded baseboard are topped by a deeply molded chair rail. The floors are pine, tending to random width, although generally fairly equal.

The rooms on this floor are believed to have been originally social rooms, according to the present Pastor. They may have undergone considerable alteration. Some of the partitions, although massively "Victorian," break up the ceiling pattern in such a way as to suggest they may have been erected at a later date than the building itself. Particularly the ceiling of the middle room rises to a peak in a curious way, which makes no sense in relation to the present cornices and partitions, but which forms part of a continuous and symmetrical design with the ceiling of the bordering corridor. Unfortunately, the original ceilings of the other rooms have been covered over, so it is impossible to judge their appearance.

The "double parlor" is now used as the choir room and organist's office. Its north wall has two large double-lancet windows, sashed, with very deep moldings and interior hood molds. The inside sills are about 14" deep; those outside about 10". At the east end are two windows, both single lancet, but that near the south wall of the room is much larger and higher than the other, making sense only with regard to the external plan of the building. The marked awkwardness of this arrangement would disappear, however, if the present partition wall were indeed not part of the original plan, but a later addition, and this is at least possible. The two windows in this room are complemented by the single lancet now opening into one of the toilets.

Near the opening between the two rooms is a projection on the north wall with a circular opening that appears to have served the flue of a heating stove.

17. The Pastor's Office: The Pastor's office is about 25 feet long by 20 feet wide, and very high, like all the rooms on this floor. The corridor which approaches it has a door into the second room of the "double parlor," a door into the Pastor's office, and a door at the end which opens into a smaller room. There was also a door which communicated directly between the Pastor's office and the "double parlor," but which has been sealed off.

The north wall has a broad double-lancet window, similar to those already described. The west wall has two windows, fairly evenly spaced, but the more southerly is slightly wider and about a foot higher than the other. These windows also differ in that they have broad sloping sills instead of flat ones. The northwest corner of the room is angled across and had an opening for the flue of a heating stove.

The most interesting feature of the room is that there are three glass-paneled doors in an arcade of lancet arches piercing the south wall near its western extremity. These open into the small room at the end of the corridor and their original purpose is unknown. This room may have served either an ante-chamber to the Pastor's office, or an inner sanctum, depending on which was the usual means of ingress. Whatever the original use of the small room, it is now devoted to storage.

It is about 12 feet long by 9 feet wide and has its own window, complementary to the two windows in the west wall of the Pastor's office.

18. The Loft: Access to the loft is gained by a tall ladder affixed to the wall of the corridor and leading to a trap door. This area has been described in the introductory paragraphs on construction.

19. Basement: The basement is reached by narrow stairs from the chapel vestibule. It also once had an outside entrance in the west wall, near the northern corner, which has been closed.

As already mentioned, the floor is dirt and the foundations are rough stone with lime mortar and brick nogging just below the floor timbers.

The cellar under the main auditorium is divided lengthwise by four parallel arcades of stone piers connected by brick arches. These piers are about four feet across by eighteen inches thick; the arches are about 5-1/2 feet wide. The stone piers show a mixture of lime mortar and hydraulic cement.

At the southern end are the massive foundations of the tower, two great masonry piers filling the space between the first and second and the third and fourth arcades respectively. Barrel-vaulting is found under this southern end of the church and recesses resembling oubliettes occur under the corner turrets.

At a point corresponding with the northern (or pulpit) wall of the auditorium, two transverse arcades, close together, bear the weight of that wall. Beyond these, further to the north, is a single parallel arcade, apparently sited along the middle of the chapel floor. There are signs of additional bracing in this area, probably dating from the installation of the chapel above in 1940. A thick beam, circular-sawed, has been inserted under the eastern interior wall of the chapel.

Overhead throughout the basement are wooden rafters, about 3" by 10", with random plank sub-flooring which is not circular-sawed. Traces of plaster or cement are observable between the planks.

20. Hardware: Doorknobs throughout the church are brown marbelized ceramic. Locks are mortised into the doors.

21. Lighting: Present lighting is electric. Capped projecting pipes for the original gas lighting are still to be seen in some of the foliated capitals and large foliated corbels in the auditorium.

22. Heating: Present heating is by oil. There are few traces of the original heating system, except possibly the hot air grills still in use along the aisles of the church proper. The modern heating plant occupies much space in the basement. A modern metal chimney from this plant rises near the northwest corner of the building, just clear of the wall. There is no sign of old chimneys. A ventilator is installed in the peak of the roof behind the tower.

D. Site: The nave axis of the church is north and south, with the principal entrance facing south.

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